

GOVERNOR'S AWARDS  
for  
Outstanding  
Volunteer  
Community Service



James H. Douglas  
Governor of Vermont

Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
National Life of Vermont  
Montpelier, Vermont

Vermont Commission on National and Community Service  
Agency of Human Services  
103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, VT 05671

## **Schedule of Events**

9:30-10:00      Registration

10:00-11:30      Awards Ceremony

Emily Wilson  
Vermont Commission on National and Community Service

Patrick Flood  
Deputy Secretary of the Agency of Human Services

*Governor James H. Douglas*

Presentation of Awards

**Refreshments Following**  
*(Please wait until the presentation of awards ends before moving to the refreshments area.)*

## **K-12 YOUTH**

**Molly Clarke** is a volunteer at a women's group home in Middlebury and a Special Olympics coach. She coaches women from the group home and others with special needs. Over the past two years, Molly served the Middlebury community with outstanding effort.

**Isaac Colby** has been a three-year member of the Lyndon State College Upward Bound program. Isaac volunteers as the Gilman Middle School basketball coach serving as a role model in teaching skills, while also teaching about healthy nutrition. Isaac volunteered 150 hours at the Lyndon Village Improvement Society.

**Matthew Collins** has been a three-year member of the Upward Bound Program at Lyndon State College. Matthew has volunteered over 150 hours through the Lyndon Village Improvement Society. He was also a student coordinator for the Warm the Children program and has volunteered multiple years at the Burklyn Arts Festival.

**Zoe Davis** has volunteered 449 hours at the Rutland Regional Medical Center since July of 2006 and has volunteered at the West Rutland School Art Program for 136 hours since 2007. Zoe is currently a member of the Upward Bound program at Castleton State College.

**Ellyn Fournier** is engaged in several different service oriented groups including the Upward Bound Program through Lyndon State College. She holds leadership roles in both the Students Against Destructive Decisions and Future Business Leaders of America. Ellyn also served at the Barton Graded after school program, Warm the Children program, and Burklyn Arts Holiday Market.

**Miranda Handy** is a young person driven to directly impact the lives of others by volunteering her time within her community. It is with these skills that Miranda serves at the Hartford after school program, a program that she was once a part of. Miranda is always striving to be the best that she can be and putting others before herself.

**Cody Hesse** serves as a junior firefighter on the Pittsford Fire Department, volunteers at the Pittsford food shelf, attained the Boy Scouts of America's highest rank - the Eagle Scout, and is a member of two police explorer posts, in addition to being active in his Students Against Destructive Decisions chapter.

**Kelsie Lavalette** lends a hand to an early childhood education program by providing activities for children 6 weeks to 3 years of age. Some of the activities include one-on-one time, language development, and most of all a nurturing aspect that young children need at the Green Mountain Children's Center in White River Junction.

**Kelly McGinty** has given over 400 hours in service to the students of her school as a peer counselor at Woodstock Union High School. Kelly has also taken the initiative to contribute to her global community when she traveled to a remote village in the Amazon to build a school.

**Samantha Ovitt** is a three-year member of the Upward Bound Program at Lyndon State College. Sam has contributed over 150 hours to the program at Samuel Read Hall Library, served as a student coordinator in the Warm the Children program and volunteered at the Burklyn Arts festival.

**Brielle Phillips** is a member of the Lyndon Institute and active both in her school and community. Brielle is a leader in the Students Against Destructive Decisions, building the Lyndon chapter from just two people to 18. She volunteered 150 hours with nutrition services of Northern Vermont Regional Hospital and has served two years with the Warm the Children program.

**Angelica Towsley** has been an active member of the East Dorset Fire Department. Angelica will take on tasks that most people her age won't, including responding to late night fires. She was recognized as "cadet of the year" in the summer fire cadet academy. Angelica has logged hundreds of hours of selfless service at the fire department.

**George Tucker, Jr.** has performed various community services, including starting P.A.L.S.-Providing Assistance to Ludlow Seniors organization. George's other acts of service include: Green up Day, Stuff a Bus food and clothing drive, helping construct the Ludlow playground, Race for Grace, March of Dimes walk, Rotary Penny Sale, Adopt a Platoon program, and Red Cross blood drives.

### **K-12 VOLUNTEER GROUP**

**Stafford Technical Center Students Against Destructive Decisions Chapter** is a group of high school students that has undertaken drug and alcohol prevention programs, highway safety issues including seat belt usage, reduction of speed and alcohol related crashes, and child safety seat installation projects. The members of Stafford Technical SADD Chapter put in countless hours to help give teens the education and opportunity to live a substance-free life.

**The Hazen Union School Key Club** impacts the lives of others by helping provide opportunities for community members to engage with one another in activities, service, and fun. Their activities include carving pumpkins for the pumpkin walk, painting butterflies and flowers on children's faces at Hardwick's Spring Festival, helping organize the annual haunted house, and serving and cleaning up for the Kiwanis induction dinners.

### **ADULT CATEGORY**

**Lyn Adams** encouragement, compassion, and individual attention to each child provides Castleton Elementary School students with additional one-on-one practice to help foster the love of reading. Lyn has been working to practice and improve reading skills for the past four years.

**Olivia Aiken** works tirelessly fundraising for the American Cancer Society Relay for Life. Olivia, a survivor of cancer herself, was awarded as the top fundraiser, as well as #1 team fundraiser. She is also active in her church, where she serves and provides meals for those less fortunate in her local community.

**Priscilla Barnard**, an active 87 year old, helps coordinate activities with the elderly and people with disabilities. In addition to volunteering two times a week in that capacity, she is also an active volunteer in the Methodist Church in Brattleboro.

**Judy Boss** serves as an RSVP Volunteer with the Castleton Community Center. She has spent countless hours producing helmet liners for our troops serving in battle. She has also started the Wounded Warrior project. She recruits knitters, and coordinates and finances the production and shipping costs of caps for wounded soldiers in Walter Reed Hospital to wear during recovery.

**Susan Buonincontro** is a volunteer who coordinates other Meals on Wheels volunteers and oversees the operation of the Bristol Meals on Wheels program for the past 5 years. Susan's oversight has fostered a unique sense of community among the volunteers.

**Alan Chandler** is a truly humble volunteer for Champlain Valley Agency on Aging. He serves as a handyman using his own tools, expertise, and sometimes his own money to provide home repairs to seniors who cannot afford and desperately need this type of help.

**Jane Coolidge** volunteers in the Brandon community. She serves at the Brandon Forestdale Senior Citizens Center, her church as a Sunday school teacher, and the Brandon food shelf. She also uses her own home as a drop site for donations.

**Pasquale "Pat" DiLegio** has volunteered for 30 years as the founder and director of creative problem solving Vermont, currently serving as director of Vermont Destination ImagiNation. Pat's efforts have provided thousands of VT kids with opportunities for creative expression and teamwork.

**Emily Frazier** has demonstrated a sustained commitment to volunteer service at the Humane Society of Chittenden County. She has been instrumental to the humane society through her dedication and commitment to working with and fostering "special needs" dogs.

**Nancy Frost** is an irreplaceable member to her communities: Corinth and Topsham. She runs the local food shelf, co-administers a deacons' discretionary fund, and facilitates the material and spiritual caring of her local community.

**Peter Grass** has traveled over 29,000 miles and accrued over 1,000 hours of service during his two years volunteering with One 2 One, by providing free transportation to Rutland county seniors. Peter transported a client to Boston over 14 times for a surgery to restore her eyesight.

**Steven Habif** is a volunteer mentor from Jericho with Community Friends Mentoring. Steve has been meeting with his mentee for the past 7 years for 2-3 hours each week. Steve's buddy is now 17 years old and describes him as the "the best friend I ever had".

**Kurt Heinchon** helped start Students for Campus Conservation, which coordinates a campus-wide recycling program for glass, aluminum, tin, and plastic at Lyndon State College. He also made it possible to compost kitchen scraps from the dining hall.

**John Larose** has been involved for the past four years in various activities centered on The Lund Family Center's mission to help children thrive. He volunteers his efforts in numerous events including, the Phonathon, Family Day Parade, Adoption Picnic, and Lund's Early Childhood Program.

**Kimberley Lashua** is the coordinator of Montpelier Meals on Wheels, engaging volunteer drivers and setting up their routes, this effort provides a home-delivered meal to frail elders and people with disabilities who cannot get to the grocery store or prepare nourishing meals.

**Bob Maritano** is committed to ending hunger in Chittenden County and has actively worked to stop malnutrition in his community for over 15 years. He volunteers seven days a week driving trucks, answering phones, cooking meals, speaking at schools, and on television broadcasts, and organizing food drives and soliciting donations.

**Millie Marron** volunteers her time leading the Lamoille Valley Osher Lifelong Learning Institute; bringing affordable learning opportunities to mature residents in her community. She engages the people of the community with invaluable opportunities to exercise their mind.

**Cheryl McMahon** volunteers her time with local school and community based activities in the town of Kirby. Through her work, she helps to meet the needs of many individuals including students, the elderly, families in crisis, teens, local businesses, and non-profit organizations.

**Mollie Norcross** has served as a youth activities volunteer with Club Johnson an out-of-school recreational group for at risk elementary students. At Johnson State College she is involved in Habitat for Humanity and a volunteer vacation to Atlanta, Georgia with the Break Away Project.

**Jim O'Reilly** is a volunteer in the Northeast Kingdom who surfaces whenever and wherever he is needed. He is active in his church, St. Elizabeth's in Lyndonville, Good Shepard Catholic Elementary School, and in his community with the Catamount Arts and Burklyn Arts Council.

**Gordon Raymond** is a volunteer mentor with Community Friends Mentoring program. He meets with his current mentee for fun weekly outings, while maintaining a supportive friendship with both of his previous mentees. Gordon has been mentoring for over 14 years.

**Charlie Read** has delivered Meals on Wheels to recipients in Franklin County for over 4 years, making deliveries three days per week. No matter what kind of weather, Charlie runs his route. If another driver cancels Charlie always willingly steps forward to fill in.

**Hannah Richardson** is a participant in Students for Campus Conservation at Lyndon State College. This club allows students and staff to recycle plastics, tin, glass, and aluminum. The club also made it possible for the dining hall to compost kitchen scraps.

**Martha Robertson** has created and organized a very successful cross-country ski event called Ski for Heat. The event raises money for fuel assistance for low-income Vermonters served by BROCC Community Action in Southwest Vermont. The ski takes place at Wild Wings Cross Country Ski Center in Peru and has been occurring since 2001.

**Mike Rorison** is a long term volunteer with the Neighbor to Neighbor AmeriCorps program at Central Vermont Council on Aging. Mike donated six cords of wood that he spent many summer weekends cutting and splitting so that elders and people with disabilities, who were affected by the fuel crisis, could get through the winter. He also arranged for Casella Waste Management to donate a truck for distribution.

**Jeffrey Snow** coordinates the volunteer transportation program, which picks up and returns veterans from their homes to the VA Medical Center for services. Assisting 5,000 veterans plus, he has served over 7,000 hours ensuring veterans receive the proper care and services.

**Mary Louise Spivak** has volunteered weekly for the past 13 years at The Gathering Place, an adult day center for elderly and people with disabilities in Brattleboro. She helps people by serving meals, running exercise groups, playing active games, providing personal care to individuals, as well as assisting in the art room.

**Byron Stookey** has been a tireless advocate for affordable housing in the Brattleboro area and statewide for over a decade. Byron has assisted hundreds of people with housing emergencies through Brattleboro Area Affordable Housing.

**Sue Strifert** operates the no charge, donations welcome Tea Room in the dining room of the North Danville Baptist Church. Sue donates profits from the Tea Room to the Open Door, a local food shelf which also assists with clothing, emergency fuel, and rent.

**Harry Swett** has been a mentor to prisoners at the St. Johnsbury Corrections facility for the past 5 years serving as a father figure, sounding board, and friend to this seriously at risk segment of society. Harry also helps organize the Alzheimer's walk in the Northeast Kingdom.

**Chris Tormey** planned and organized all aspects of a community service project to build a new performing arts space at Cabot School with the assistance of community volunteers and students. Volunteers spent over 800 hours volunteering at the actual building site and over 500 hours on fundraising.

**Donna Waldron** has volunteered for many years with Spectrum Youth and Family Services, Donna first started helping out with the annual fundraising event, then joined the planning committee, and she now serves as a mentor.

**Wesley Ward** is an asset to the St. Johnsbury and Danville communities by serving as: President of St. Johnsbury Kiwanis Club; youth mentor; Guardian ad Litem; president-elect of the Northeast Kingdom Chamber of Commerce; board member of St. J Works; and volunteer for Caledonia County Relay for Life.

## **ADULT VOLUNTEER GROUP**

**Highgate Volunteer Fire Department** provides an avenue for families to spend invaluable bonding time together by enabling families an opportunity to create precious memories in the Highgate community. Whether it be through their service as firefighters, fun community activities for youth and families, or fire safety demonstrations for Highgate elementary, the Highgate Volunteer Fire Department is committed to making their community a safer place.

**The IBM Days of Caring Team led by Clark Hubbard** provided 260 hours of volunteer service to a senior lady over the course of four years, helping her to maintain her yard and home and as a result allowed her to remain in her residence. IBM has an employee volunteer program, where employees have the opportunity to participate in service during the normal work day.

**Martha Roberts and Clare Munat** are co-facilitators of Vermont State Program Standing Committee for Adult Mental Health and on a regular basis they bring the voices and perspectives of consumers of mental health services and families of adults with severe mental illness to the Department of Mental Health.

**Upper Valley Dog Park Supporters** organized and led the development, implementation, and supervision of the first community dog park in the Upper Valley region. Their efforts spanned 5 years. The park is entirely operated and maintained by volunteers.

## **FAMILY**

**Curtis and Lucille Brown** inspire the community through their service in the Franklin County Senior Center and the Veterans in Foreign War (VFW) in St. Albans. Together they have over 100 years of service in the VFW and the American Legion. Curtis and Lucille have both been active members in the Franklin County Senior Center for the past 20 years, where they were also involved in the Meals on Wheels program.

**Robert and Lucile Evens** have been members of the RSVP program for the past 11 years. Robert serves in the Cavendish community as a volunteer fire fighter, a board member of the Black River Good Neighbors in Ludlow, the Fletcher Foundation, as well as a Green Mountain RSVP advisory board member. Lucille is extensively involved in the Meals on Wheels program in Springfield and in the Council on Aging.

**Donald and Shirley Foster** have volunteered with, the Waterbury Meals on Wheels program, preparing and delivering meals for over 20 years and serving 5 days a week with Donald missing no more than two weeks in 20 years. Looking at records back to 1997 Donald and Shirley have over 8,000 hours of combined service (which covers just 12 of their 20 years of service).

**Gilbert and Antonina Rodriguez** began their service in the RSVP program in 1995 at the Vermont Medical Center. Whether they are sorting and delivering mail, delivering Meals on Wheels, installing Personal Emergency Response systems, or managing volunteers, they have been actively engaged in service. Between the two of them they have accumulated 10,500 hours of service, saving the hospital \$157,500.



**Jane and Robert Welch** perform approximately 50 hours plus each week of volunteer service between the Pittsford Food Shelf, Congregational Church, Historical Society, Lions Club, RSVP Bone Builders, and Hubbardton Battlefield. No matter what the task is Jane and Robert are happy to lend a hand. They have also created a lunch program that extends into the summer, when the school lunch program has come to an end.

**Ariel, Ben, and Crystal Zevon** have been working in Barre for several years to develop the Local Agricultural Community Exchange (LACE). They have provided this service at no cost with a commitment to provide fresh, nutritious, affordable food to the community; to link all sectors of the food chain from farmers to consumers; and provide opportunities to low-income and disadvantaged community members seeking employment.

### **NATIONAL SERVICE PARTICIPANT**

**Janet Alexander**, an RSVP member of Rutland County Reads, is an active volunteer in the community; she has devoted many hours of her time over the years, in various capacities, including reading to an elementary classroom, with an emphasis on inspiring the children to love literacy.

**Helen Church**, known as Grandma Helen, makes the children she works with her number one priority enabling each and every child to grow, learn and mature under her loving wings! Helen has provided over 11,000 hours of service to the children in her community and has been active through the Foster Grandparent program.

**Maria Contro** is the quintessential volunteer who has demonstrated a true love of her community and an unwavering commitment and dedication to the Meals on Wheels program of Springfield. She has a devotion to volunteerism, making it a full time endeavor. She has served 10,600 hours for the RSVP program for over 14 years.

**Jean Davies** has volunteered in the Rutland Reads program through RSVP for seven years with the same teacher. She has devoted many hours of her time over the years in various capacities, including reading to an elementary classroom, while inspiring the love of literacy.

**Jacob Feldman** is a second term AmeriCorps Vermont Community Stewardship Program member serving with the Montpelier Parks. Jake has outstanding ability to peer mentor fellow crew members. He works diligently to maintain and improve Montpelier's parks through trail maintenance, restoration and improvement, making signs, creating new park spaces, and nature trail improvements.

**Nina Fersen** creates a better world for the people of Bennington County through her volunteer work with RSVP. Nina helps elders and people with disabilities access benefits, as well as assisting in tax preparation. Nina also volunteers at the Restorative Justice Center as a panel member.

**Albie Fox** is a Vermont Community Stewardship Program AmeriCorps member working with residents of Twin Pines properties. He has started libraries in several locations, started a homeowners' newsletter, energized the renters' publication, and worked on acquiring green, energy-saver appliances for various properties.

**Verma Galarnaeu** has provided over 12,000 hours of service during her 16 years as a Foster Grandparent at Northeast School in Rutland. Verma has served with Nancy Campbell, the same teacher, for all 16 years.

**Marjorie “Dede” Glenn** has volunteered in her community for the past 63 years. Marjorie is the epitome of volunteer service. In 1992, Marjorie joined RSVP and since then she has acquired more than 4,400 hours of service in her local community of Island Pond.

**Elizabeth Haggerty** has served almost 1,000 hours at the Our Place Drop-In Center located in Belows Falls. She has worked on other initiatives including Windham County Reads non-profit program, volunteering at Central Elementary school in Bellows Falls as an RSVP volunteer, as well as the Youth Services Court Diversion Board.

**Jai Holly** has served as a Foster Grandparent in Bennington Elementary School for the past four years. Jai spearheaded an effort to educate children in her class about UNICEF and get them to trick-or-treat for UNICEF this past year at Halloween.

**Frances Hunt** joined RSVP in Bennington 1996 and hasn't stopped serving since. She has worked on a variety of projects including bulk mailings, Parking meter Ambassador Program, Stark Hose Gallery Greeter, Red Cross blood drives, Self Help and Resource Exchange at Second Congregational Church, and many more.

**Gertrude Jackson** has been a devoted RSVP Volunteer for 14 years and in that time has provided 7,091 hours of dedicated service to 39 different non-profits in Addison County. She has warmed 15 elementary schools with her lovely lap robes and shawls.

**Casey Lee** plays a pivotal role in developing creative youth programs, recruiting community volunteers, and forging meaningful and caring relationships with area youth. He is currently a second-year Vermont Youth Development Corps AmeriCorps\*State Program member with the city of Winooski.

**Marie Leatherbarrow** is a senior companion for the Champlain Valley Agency on Aging who offers companionship and support to seven community homebound elders who are alone and isolated. She has been visiting seniors in Franklin County since May of 2002.

**Eric Luebbert** is a second-term AmeriCorps Vermont Community Stewardship Program member serving at the Morningside Shelter in Brattleboro. Eric helps homeless clients access community resources they need in order to transition from homelessness to housing.

**Kerri MacLaury** has served as a Vermont Youth Development Corps AmeriCorps\*State Program member with The Collaborative since September 2007. During this time Kerri has partnered with a teacher to start a Students Against Destructive Decisions in the local high school. Over 300 local high school youth have signed up for the substance free events.

**2008-2009 Neighbor to Neighbor AmeriCorps Team at Champlain Valley Agency on Aging** provide direct service to seniors, manage volunteers, and present programs for seniors. The team members include Mia Brown, Casey Clark, Stacy Norford, Dawn Palladino and Joanna Stein. The entire team goes above and beyond what is expected of AmeriCorps members. The team also organized the Selamta Comfort Doll Project, where volunteers from Champlain Valley Agency on Aging made 271 dolls for children who were orphaned as a result of AIDS in Ethiopia.

**Jan O'Hara** is a dedicated volunteer who has been instrumental in starting the RSVP bone builders program in the town of Shrewsbury. As a retired nurse Jan knew the bone builders program would be beneficial to the people of her town, and she led the effort to start a program in Shrewsbury.

**Patricia Paine** is well into her second term with the Neighbor to Neighbor AmeriCorps serving at Northeastern Vermont Area Agency on Aging. Patricia has lead nearly 40 healthy aging programs, inspiring seniors in the Northeast Kingdom to join her Living Strong, Matter of Balance, and water exercise programs.

**Trish Perkins** has been an RSVP volunteer for 18 years and in that time has provided more than 3,450 hours of dedicated service to non-profits in Addison County. Whether it is volunteering at her local library, serving in her church, or volunteering at the thrift store for the last 15 years, Trish is always looking out for the welfare of others.

**Kelly Pulawski** is a second term Vermont Community Stewardship Program AmeriCorps member who goes above and beyond the requirements of her position offering hope for those experiencing homelessness at the Rutland County Housing Coalition. Acting as a case manager to clients, she has also volunteered to be a part of the Smart Glow energy-saving initiative where she teaches families about energy conservation.

**Rebecca Rogers** is a second-year member of Vermont Community Stewardship Program and has excelled in her outreach efforts for HomeShare VT in South Burlington. She helps elders and people with disabilities to remain living at home by matching them with people seeking affordable housing and/or care giving opportunities.

**Dawn Sarli** served two consecutive AmeriCorps\*VISTA years as Green Mountain College's K-12 Outreach Coordinator. Dawn has coordinated service learning partnerships in Poultney between the college and community, and serves as the director of the Poultney Mentoring Club.

**Holley Schmidlapp** is in her second year as a Vermont Youth Tomorrow AmeriCorps Vista member at the Willowell Foundation. Behind the scenes she has been instrumental in building capacity for the foundation, helping to provide opportunities for students, and helping community members build a sense of connection with their local ecology.

**Cynthia Sheehan** is an RSVP volunteer that recognizes unfavorable tasks and graciously steps forward to take them on. Cynthia is an expert sewer making contributions to the RSVP Operation Dolls and More project. This is a project where seniors work all year long sewing, knitting, woodworking, shopping, refurbishing toys, and organizing books so more families in need and kids at risk will not feel isolated and forgotten during the holiday.

**Sally Turner** has provided children at Neshobe School in Brandon with a nurturing environment, sharing her educational experiences with them, and being an outstanding role model in the classroom for the past eight years with the Foster Grandparent Program.

### **SERVICE LEARNING**

**Professor William Kuehn** has encouraged faculty to incorporate civic engagement, service-learning, and community-based research into their teaching pedagogies. Due to his support and guidance, the Sociology program at Castleton has been a leader in embedding these practices and approaches into its major.

### **VERMONT LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

**Susan Gallagher** has been a lifelong volunteer in the Northeast Kingdom with a focus on the Burklyn Arts Council and the Northeast Vermont Regional Hospital. She has also served in various capacities with Cub and Boy Scouts of America, her church and Lyndon State Institute.

**John Linehan** is an extremely humble, reserved man who has served the Strafford community for all of his adult life. John unselfishly volunteers at Morrill Memorial and Harris Library, Chapel of Our Lady Light, Strafford Athletic Association, and serving as a member of the Recreation Board, Treasurer of the Cemetery Association, and PTA President.

**Patricia Shepard** is a dedicated member of the Hardwick Rescue Squad and has provided emergency care, training, and assistance to her community for over 30 years. Pat has given countless unselfish hours to the squad whether it is cleaning the ambulances, training new members, restocking supplies, or sewing new jackets for members.

#### *In Memory of Millie Katz*

**Millie Katz** was inspired by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and made volunteering the cornerstone of her life. Millie was a member of RSVP for the past 20 years in Bennington. In the early 90's Millie coordinated the Student Community Volunteer Program, coordinating placement of over 50 students in hospitals, nursing homes, childcare facilities, and many other non-profits. Over the past 14 years, Millie has volunteered in the Center for Restorative Justice as a Diversion Board member where she was able to help give people a second chance to start over. Millie's philosophy about volunteering stems from her belief that volunteers specialize in public relations and understand the complexity of community problems, allowing them to play an important role in solving these problems. Volunteers like Millie Katz give hope and strength to our communities.